

Cracking the Code  
with Kodály:  
Applications of Kodály in  
Choral Rehearsals



<https://tinyurl.com/KodalyGMEA>

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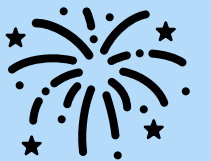
# BREAKING DOWN THE BASICS

## WHAT KODÁLY IS:

- A philosophy of music education
- Singing-based
- Process-oriented
- Developmentally grounded
- Sequenced
- Multi-sensory
- An approach that emphasizes sound before sight (moves from the known to the unknown)

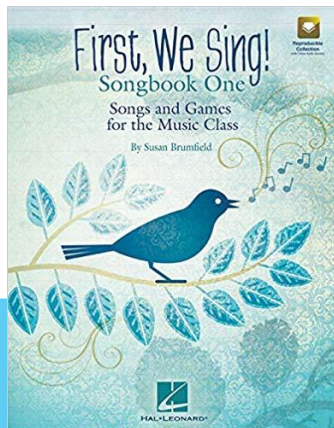
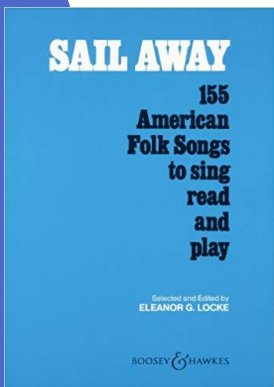
## WHAT KODÁLY ISN'T:

- A prescribed method
- Something that relies solely on solfege and hand-signs
- A way of teaching that requires students to be still and silent at all times
- Static



"The pure soul of the child must be considered sacred; what we implant there must stand every test, and if we plant anything bad, we poison his soul for life." (Kodály, selected writings, p.141)

# CONTENT!



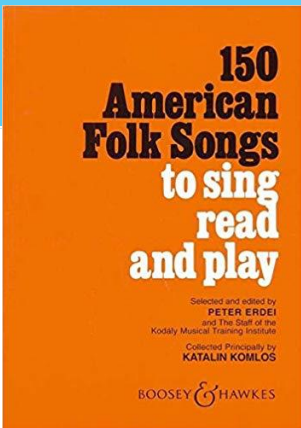
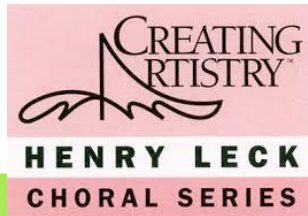
BOOSEY & HAWKES



-Folksongs

-Classical Repertoire

-High-Quality Concert Music



# THE NITTY-GRITTY

## The Traditional Prepare, Present, Practice Model:

- **-Prepare:** Concepts are introduced through songs, games, and activities. Students gain familiarity and comfort with the concepts despite not knowing the actual names or labels for the concepts.
- **-Present:** Concepts are named/made conscious (“This is a half note and it is worth two beats”). This happens in one short, concise lesson.
- **-Practice:** Named concepts are practiced in as many ways as possible.

Okay, so In a choral rehearsal, this looks slightly different than it would in an elementary general music class. While a concept may be in the preparation stage for one or two months in a traditional Kodály sequence, in a choral rehearsal, you may include just a few activities right before a concept is presented. Similarly, some skilled secondary Kodály teachers suggest that you jump right in with the concept presentation. **Find what works for your students and go with it!**





# HOLD ON A SEC...

If I don't think my students are quite ready to read the notation for something, I often do the following:

- Have my students read my hand signs
- Have my students sing using a tone ladder
- Teach the section by rote.

Rote teaching is **TOTALLY OKAY** in the Kodály world if your students still need to get certain sounds and intervals in their ears. Rote teaching, especially when done in conjunction with solfege, gives the students the musical vocabulary they need in order to read!

\*Many people prefer to use do-re-mi as a jumping-off point for “older beginners”. I think students tend to sing sol-mi with a prettier and more tuneful tone, so I stick with the traditional sequence. My middle school students and I move to the entire pentatonic scale very quickly (within the first week of school).



# BUT WHAT DOES A KODÁLY-INSPIRED REHEARSAL ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE?

Note: You already do tons of this!

-Include many songs and activities!  
Keep your students on their toes!

-Are **structured** so that there is a **major task**, several **minor tasks**, a game (or **change of pace**), and **musical transitions**.  
Transitions are a big thing in Kodály land!  
Think of ways to musically connect one activity or song to the next. It becomes the ultimate puzzle for teachers!

-Include games. Middle-schoolers are not too old, and your ensemble is not too big. It can be done.

-Don't include much speaking.

-Are often conducted without the aid of a piano.

# RECONCILING KODÁLY AND THE "REAL WORLD"

-We subdivide everything. My students learn from the beginning that one beat = two pulses. For us, this takes a lot of the guess-work out of sight-reading.

-We count-sing. While this is not usually done in Kodály-inspired classrooms, I find it helps us stay together. Also, in the land of Robert Shaw, I think this is a life-long skill!

-I teach sight-reading through our repertoire until January (except for during our after-school all-state rehearsals). In January, we add LGPE-style etudes to the beginning of every rehearsal. It feels like a big risk to wait until January, but it works for us!

-I have my students do melodic and rhythmic dictations 3-4 times each week. This is our way of approaching sight-reading etudes in as multi-sensory of a way as possible.

-I don't insist that my students read all of their concert repertoire. I strive to have them read one element from their scores. This could be as tiny as a phase from the rhythm or melody. Decoding the form is also a reading skill! If my students are not able to read any elements of the score, I've probably picked something that is too hard.

-We do plenty of "light" music (we even have a "pops" concert every spring). We still work through the music in a Kodály- inspired way.



Sing in E minor.

1. 2.

3 If you dance then you must have boots of shi - ning leath - er,

5 Mon - ey in your pock - et book, in your cap a feath - er,

7 But if you will sing with me,

9 You don't need a cent you see,

Come and sing to - geth - er.



Sing



with



me



♪            ♪   ♪   ♪            ♪   ♪  
l,            d   d   r            d   l,

♪            ♪            ○  
s,            d            l,

1. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

2. ♪ ♪

3. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

4. ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

5. ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪

6. ♪ ♪ ♪

7. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

8. ○

1. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩

2. ♩ ♩ ,

3. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩

4. ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

5. ♩ ♪ ♪ ♩ ♩

6. ♩ ♩ ♩ ,

7. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩

8. ♩

1. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

3. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

5. ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪

7. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

2. ♪ ♪ ,

4. ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

6. ♪ ♪ ♪ ,



1. ♪ ♪♪ ♪

2. ♪ ♪ ,

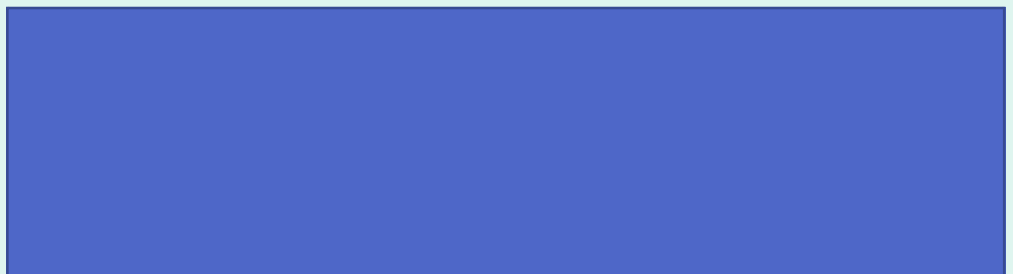
3. ♪ ♪♪ ♪



5. ♪♪ ♪♪ ♪

6. ♪ ♪ ♪ ,

7. ♪ ♪♪ ♪



1. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩



3. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩



5. ♪ ♪ ♩ ♩

6. ♩ ♩ ♩

,

7. ♩ ♪ ♩ ♩



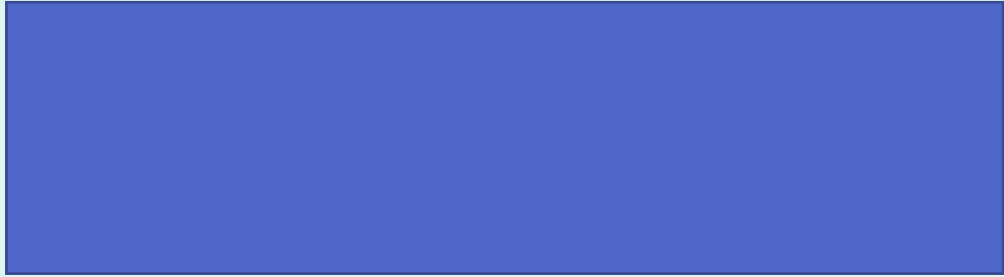




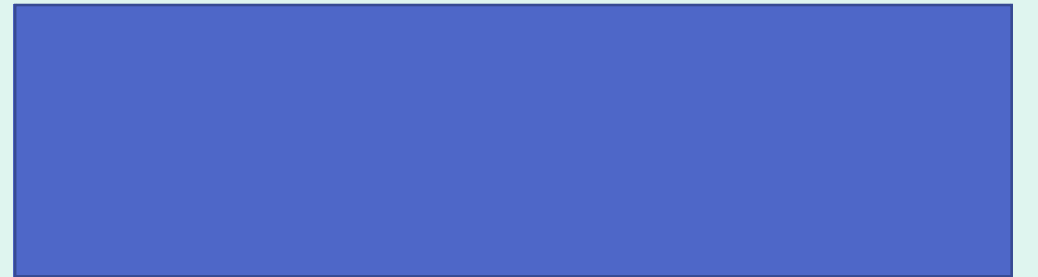
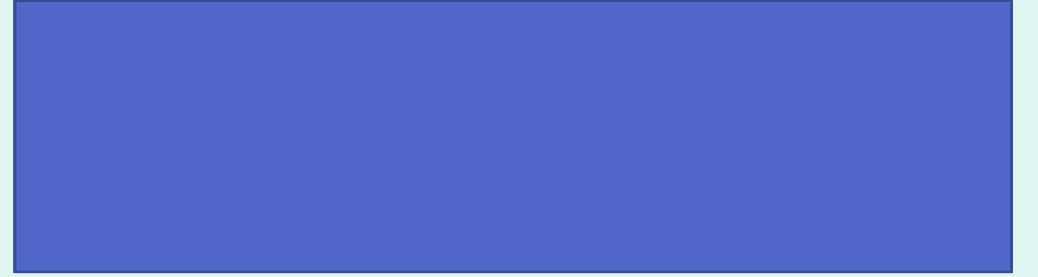
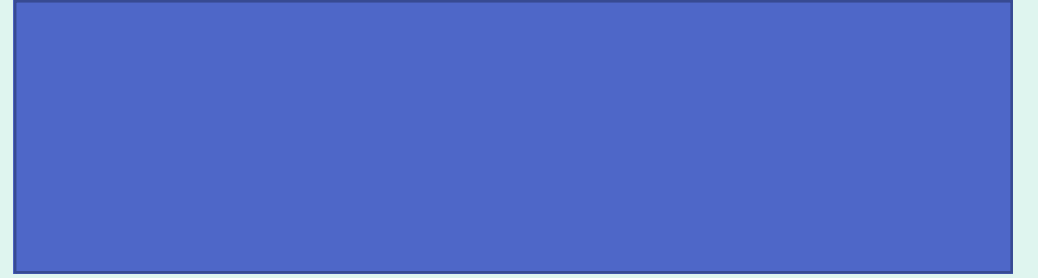
5. ♩ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪

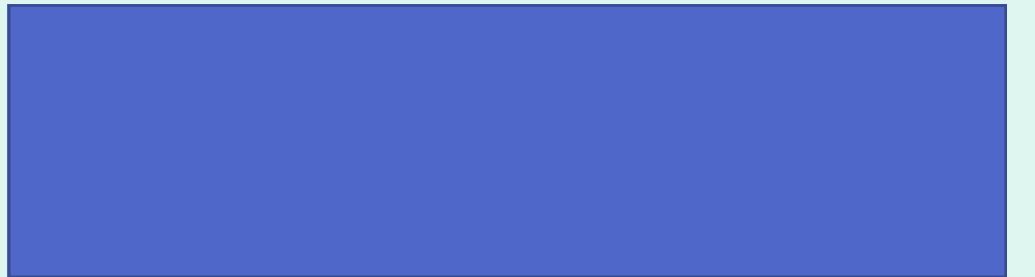
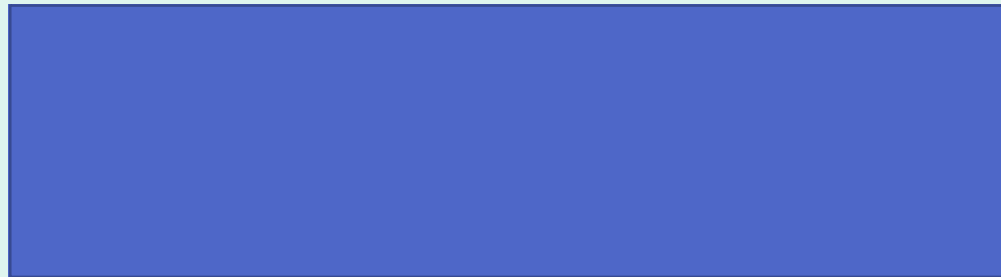
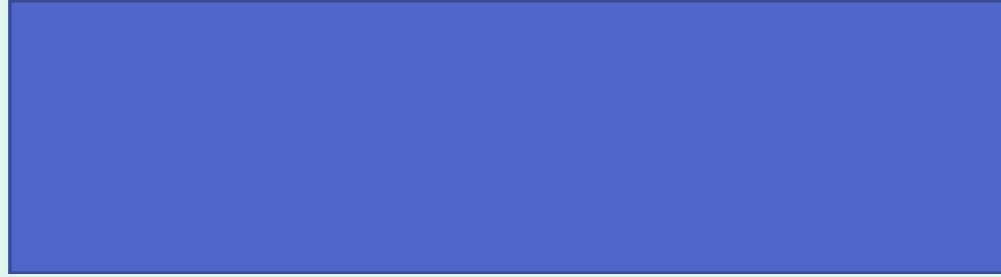
6. ♪ ♪ ♪ ,



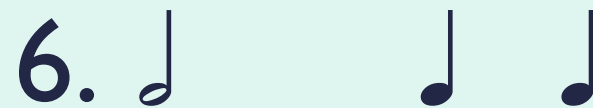
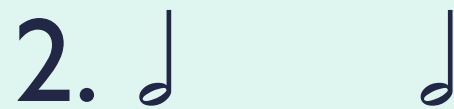


5. ♩ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪





Find the passage in Takeda!



## Measures 1-8

1. ♩ ♪♪ ♩

3. ♩ ♪♪ ♩

5. ♪♪ ♪♪ ♩

7. ♩ ♪♪ ♩

2. ♩ ♩ ,

4. ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ,

6. ♩ ♩ ♩ ,

8. ○

---

## Ostinato

♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ○

l, d d r d l, s, d l,

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N  
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T  
T  
I  
O  
N

SING DO

TURN IT INTO SOL

SOL

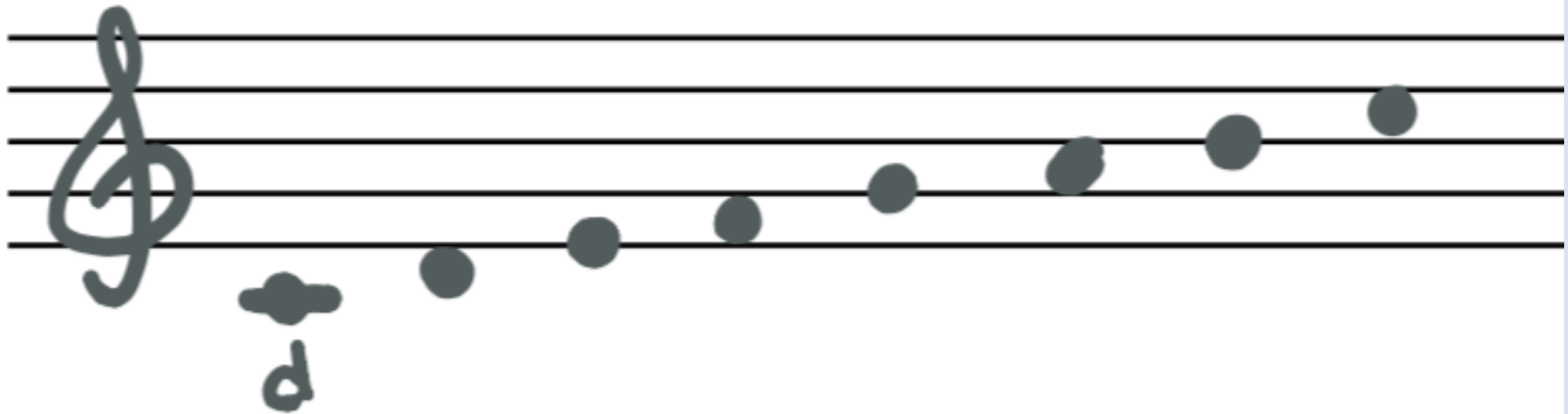
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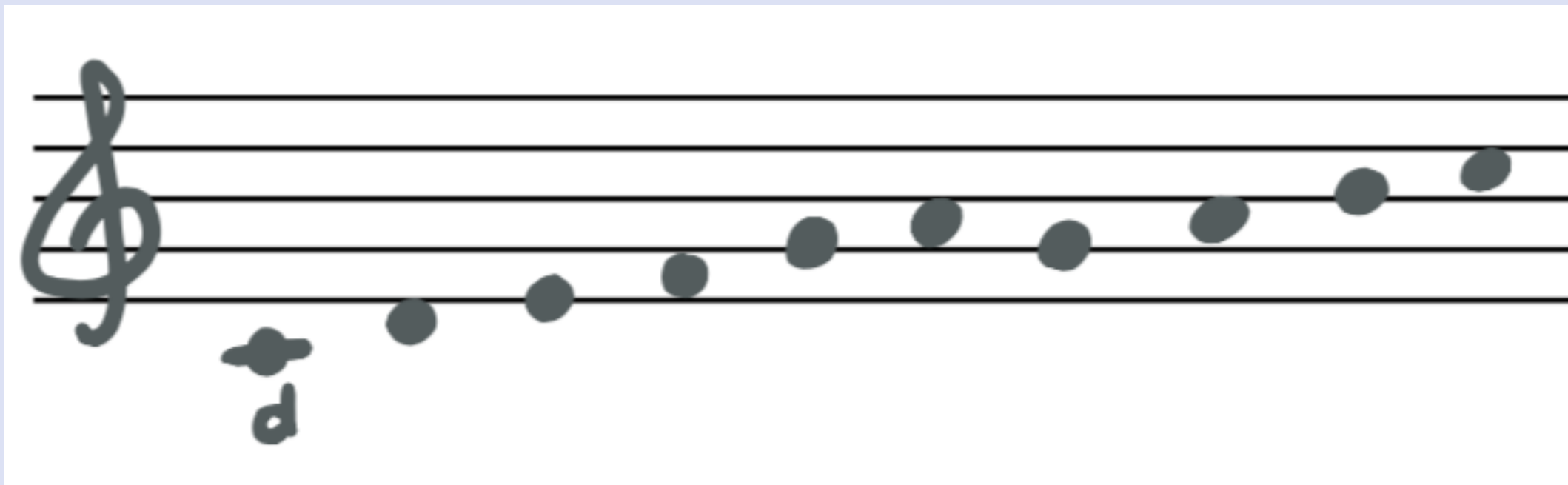
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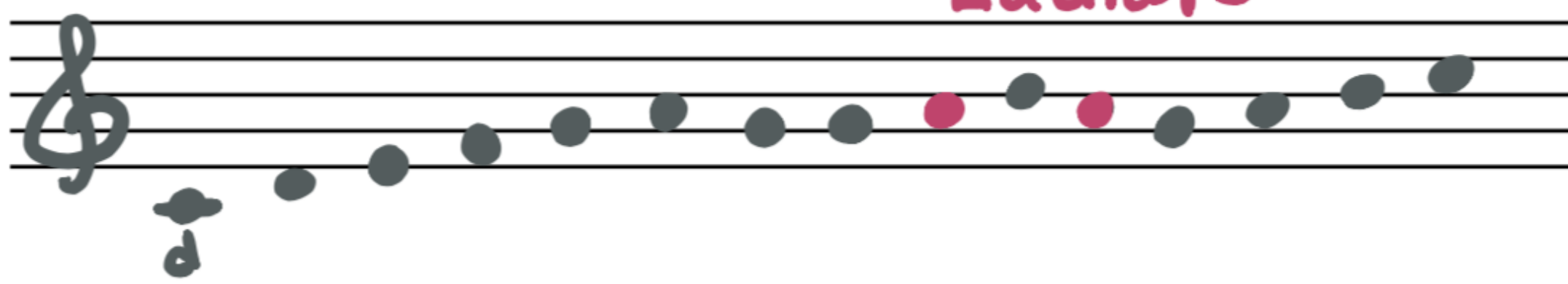




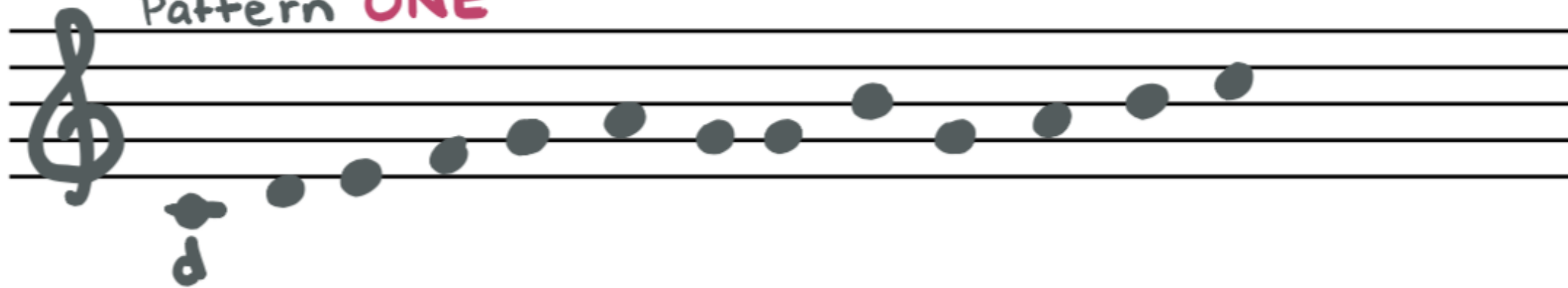




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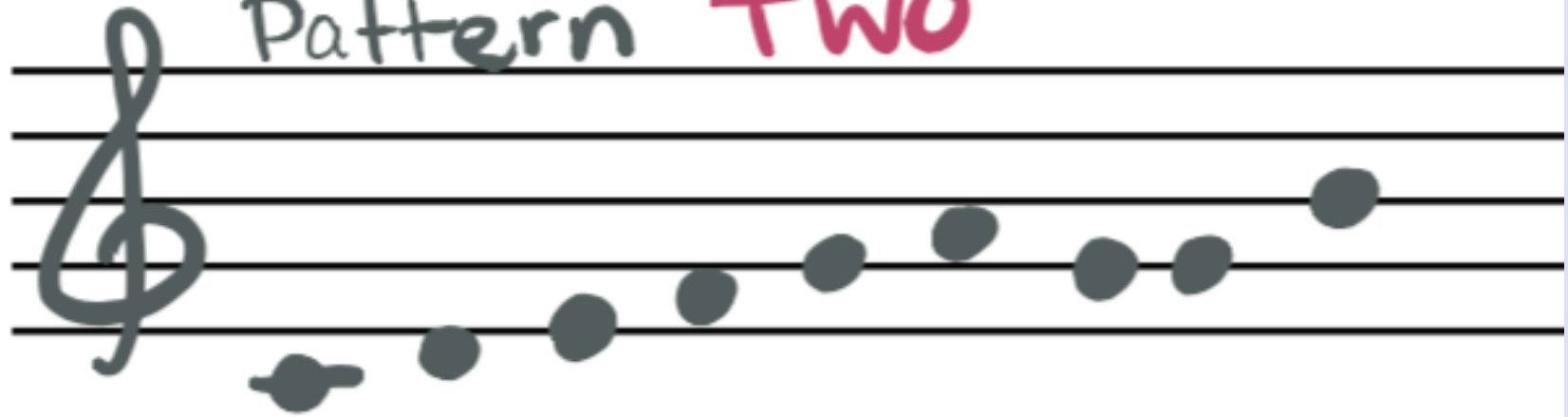


Pattern ONE



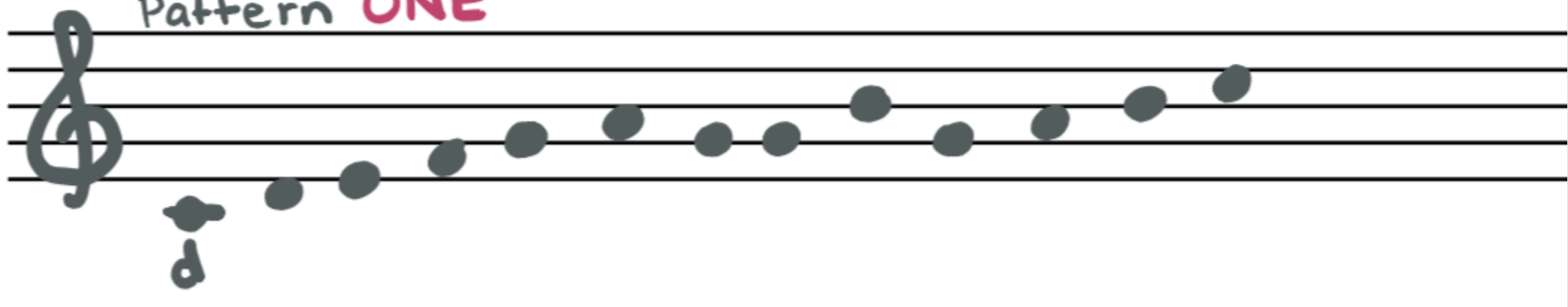


Pattern TWO



Does Pattern One or Pattern Two appear first in *Ton Thé*?

Pattern ONE



A musical staff in treble clef showing a sequence of 14 notes. The notes are: D4 (below staff), E4 (first line), F4 (first space), G4 (second line), A4 (second space), B4 (third line), C5 (third space), D5 (fourth line), E5 (fourth space), F5 (fifth line), G5 (above staff), A5 (above staff), B5 (above staff), and C6 (above staff).

Pattern TWO



A musical staff in treble clef showing a sequence of 10 notes. The notes are: D4 (below staff), E4 (first line), F4 (first space), G4 (second line), A4 (second space), B4 (third line), C5 (third space), D5 (fourth line), E5 (fourth space), and F5 (fifth line).